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ASPA, ROSARIO

John Burgess of the Society of
Painters in water-colours.

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WALKER'S QUARTERLY

JOHN BURGESS

Born 1814.

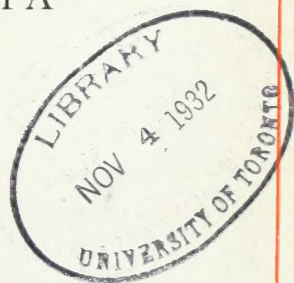
Died 1874

OF THE
SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS

BY
ROSARIO ASPA



BY APPOINTMENT

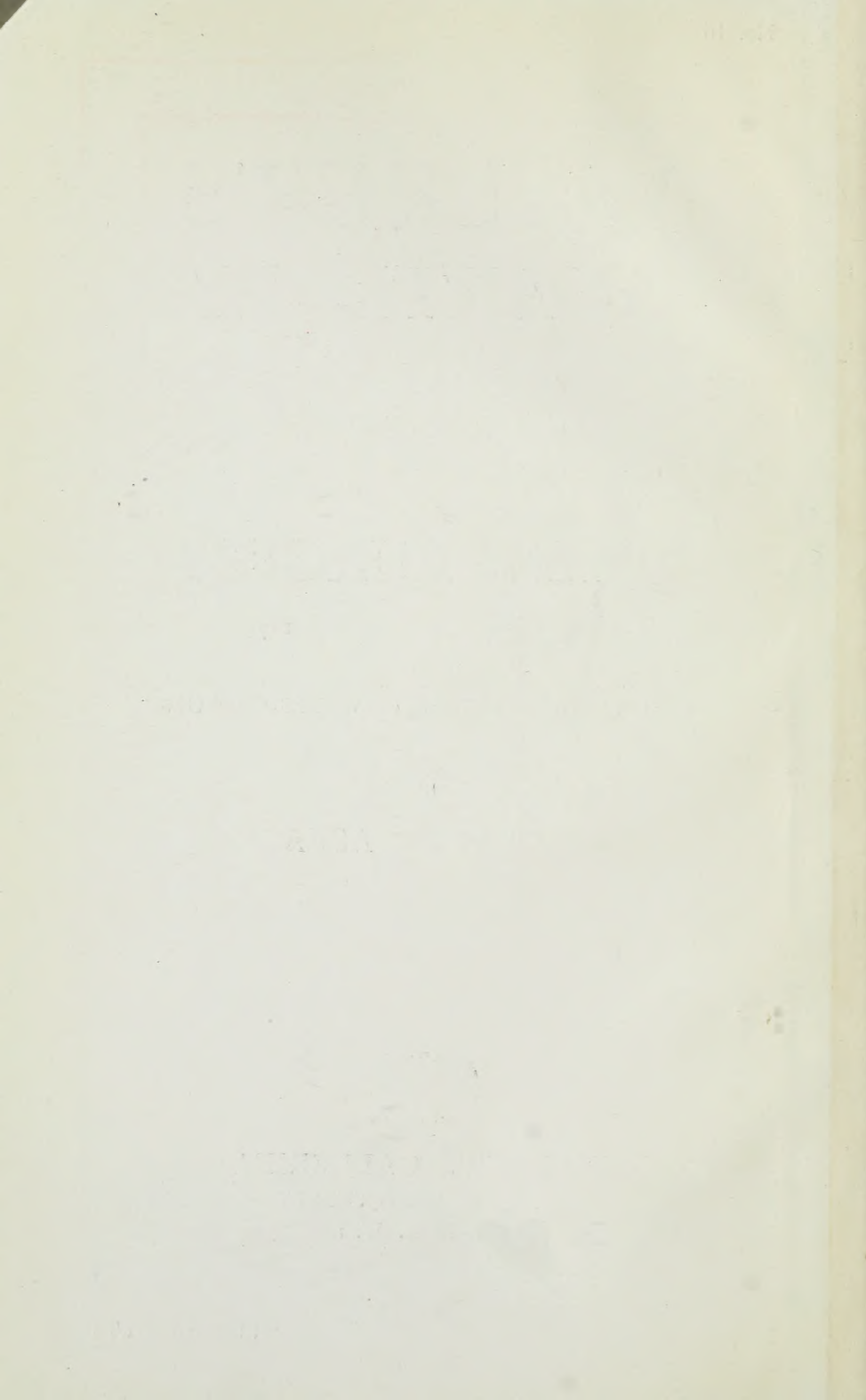


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WALKER'S GALLERIES

118, NEW BOND STREET
LONDON, W. 1

PRICE 2/6 NETT







JOHN BURGESS

WALKER'S QUARTERLY

No. 16

JOHN BURGESS

Born 1814.

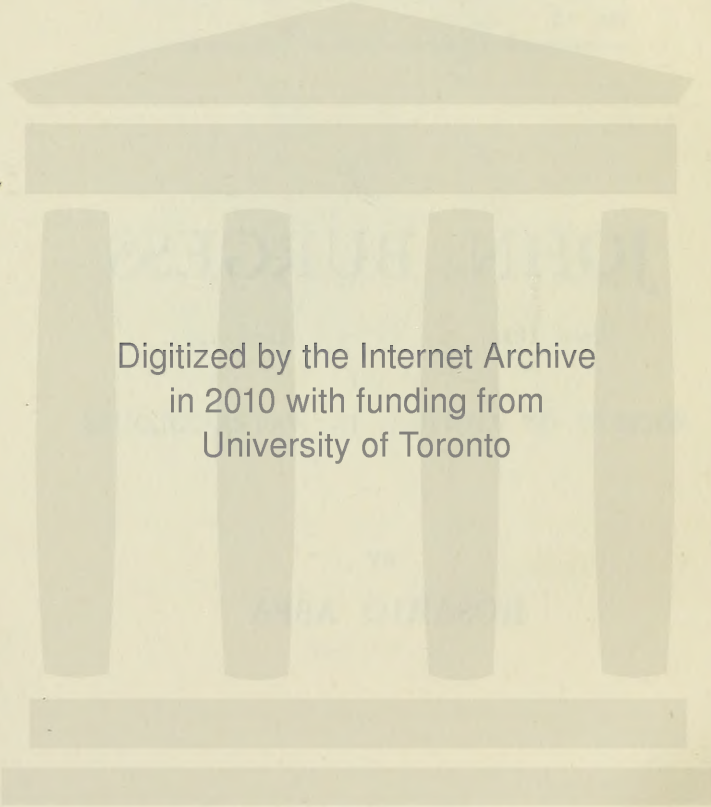
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PUBLISHED AT
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118, NEW BOND STREET
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JOHN BURGESS, Esq.

To the Editor of the *Leamington Spa Courier*.

Sir,—It is much to be wished that some more practised pen than mine had put together the following paragraphs. From what one sees, the interest in Burgess, no less than in his works, seems to be confined to the few who were well acquainted with both. Mr. Ruskin, years ago, wondered that his works were not more extensively known. So, now-a-days, do the artists, who seem the only persons eager to obtain, and able to appreciate them. For my own part, I feel indignant that so remarkable a genius should have gone to his grave with only about as much notice as would have been accorded to his bath-chairman, and so, failing a stronger hand, I have here put together such memoranda as I have been able to collect of his art life, some remarks on his work and character; and I have added a complete list of those of his drawings, exhibited at the Old Water Colour Society's room, from 1850—the year of his election as a member of that society—till 1874, the year of his death. This list may be entirely trusted. I was assisted

in its compilation by Mr. Thomas, the custodian of the society, to whom my thanks are due. Much is also due to the assistance I have had from Mr. Geo. Fripp, Mr. J. B. Burgess, Mr. Selim Rothwell, and the Misses Burgess.

If any of my remarks on the character of the late artist should, to some, appear fanciful, I can only say that I had uncommon opportunities during a very close intimacy of verifying my impressions, and, as given, they are, in my opinion, perfectly just and true.

I have made no mention of the prices, absurdly low for the most part, at which Burgess sold his beautiful drawings. I *know* that he was conscious that his price had no fair relation to the value of his work, as compared with that realised by far inferior men. But this, as will be seen later, was in harmony with his character. He would rather have his patron indebted to him, than be under any obligation to his patron.

May I mention that if any of your readers can give me further information I shall be greatly favoured thereby.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. ASPA.

PRIORY HOUSE,
LEAMINGTON.

February, 1877.



Size 15 by 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ins.

CHÂTEAU DE LA GARAYE, NEAR DINAN

It has been remarked, times out of number, that the artistic faculty will often flourish in families for many successive generations. The Carracci, the Bellinis, the Holbeins, Cuyyps; the Vernets, Scheffers; and, among us, the Duncans, Goodalls, Linnells, and many others that could be named, are cases in point, and the Burgess family furnishes another striking example. The late John Burgess was of the fifth generation of painters. He, his sister, Miss A. Burgess, and his cousin, Mr. J. B. Burgess (of "Bravo Toro" renown), represent the art of the family of the day.

The last generation was represented by Mr. John Cart Burgess, author of some works on Perspective, Studies of Trees, &c.—father to the subject of this sketch; by Mr. H. W. Burgess, landscape painter to William IV., and who was no less known for his great talent than for his goodness and his charity; and by their elder brother, Thomas, an artist, also of great promise, but who died young.

The grandfather was an eminent portrait painter, of whom I have it that he married a Welsh lady, one of 32 children! The great-grandfather is said to have given lessons to Gainsborough. A fine work by this artist hung in the late Exhibition of Paintings by Old Masters at Burlington House, '76-77, and its

excellence gave occasion to some enquiry and correspondence in *The Times*.

Three of the family in succession taught at the Charter House School, during a period of 80 years, and one ancestor, it is said, was a musician, and was knighted. The family carries its history up to the time of the Conqueror, but that kind of history it is unnecessary to go into here.

The mother of John Burgess was a daughter of Anker Smith, A.R.A., the eminent engraver. She was a clever sculptress, and carried off the silver medal when a student at the Royal Academy. The brothers of this lady were Edwin D. Smith, a clever miniature painter, still living; Herbert L. Smith (died in 1870), an historical and portrait painter, who had the honour of painting the Queen and Prince Consort more than once; and Frederick Smith, a promising sculptor, and pupil of Sir F. Chantrey, who died young. Sir W. Ross, miniature painter to the Court, was another relation.

Thus it will be seen that, in addition to his inherited talent, Burgess, as a child, had the best of teaching in his own family, and it is not surprising that his powers developed betimes. As dates are not entertaining, I have collected but few, which I will now give together, to have done with them. Burgess died in 1874, aged 60.

He must consequently have been born in 1814. He was in Paris in 1833; in Italy in 1834, returning in 1837. He settled in Leamington about 1840; he married a Miss Vaughan, of a Welsh family (Llanelly), in 1842; was elected an associate of the Society of Water Colour Painters in 1850; and, as above said, he died in 1874. Dates seem to mark, like stones by the wayside, the Road of Life. But how few they are! How short the journey of those even, that go farthest!

An early passion for the sea was set at rest by a few weeks' cruise in the channel, aboard a revenue cutter. While on this trip Burgess landed in the Isle of Wight, of which he made the tour afoot, sketching on the way. Many sketches, records of this trip, still remain, to show how firm a hand, how true an eye he had already acquired. He looked on some of these very sketches with complacency, only a few weeks before his death, remarking that they were not so bad "for a boy," and that he was "by no means ashamed of them."

After that he sketched a great deal in the company of his uncle, H. W. Burgess, who, at that time, had a great reputation as a draughtsman with the "broad lead," and who, as we have seen above, was employed at Court. From this uncle he must have learned all that could be

taught in the management of a pencil, though the delicacy, the truth, and the originality that he delighted in were all his own. Sketching thus, as he used to say, "for long summer days on the banks of the Thames—getting at every excursion a keener relish for art," these were the happiest days of his boyhood.

While still young, he went to Normandy and Paris, making drawings, usually half imperial size, of many interesting subjects.

In his 20th year he went, full of power, to Italy, travelling as far as Turin by post, with ample time, therefore, to study the country on the way. He had a well-filled purse, and denied himself nothing. He often remarked to me that command of means was a disastrous thing to most young men, and that it had been nothing less than ruin to him. It led him to pleasure instead of work, and it cut short the career that had been marked out for him—that of a figure painter. In Florence and Rome he led a merry life, spending his time in amusement rather than study, but, nevertheless, saved by his artistic instinct, and, as I think, by his good blood, from that meanest of vices—idleness. In fact during this very time he made a host of clever sketches. To shew, however, his want of method, I may mention that there exists a capital sketch made at Florence in this wise. He had supped with

some friends, in order to drink wine of the new vintage—an apparently innocent, but really most treacherous beverage. He saw all his companions “under the table,” and then in the early morning, “aching for his bed,” he left them. But the beauty of the scene outside so impressed him, that he felt constrained to sketch it before seeking the rest he so much needed, and so he sat down and made a capital drawing, wearied as he was.

And in Rome, also, where he studied “the figure” as much (or as little) as he liked, and in Naples, he made many charming studies. It is almost superfluous to point out that so long a stay in such scenes, spent in the society of the many great artists of all countries, who are always found there, must have fostered the dignity and spirit with which the young artist already embodied his conceptions. I doubt not that a certain nobility of style, apparent throughout his work, was confirmed by this long sojourn in Italy.

On his return, in 1837, he was honoured by a request to send a folio of his sketches to her Majesty, that she might select a subject for her album. This was done, and it is quite characteristic of the man that being asked to name the price of the drawing he had made, according to the Queen’s command, he named so low a sum

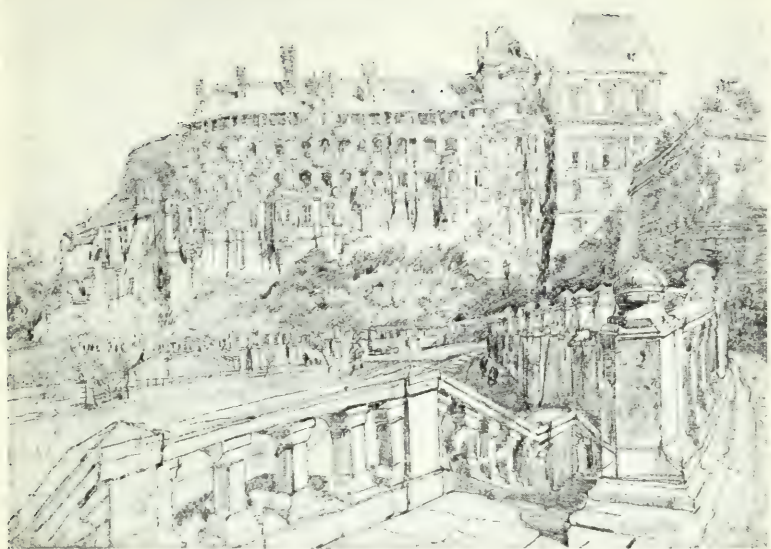
that the gentleman in whose province it was to settle with him, said "No! no! that will never do; I shall double that figure, and I think it, even then, too little." The original sketch, and the dimensions given by the Queen, are still extant.

In early drawings made in Devon, in street bits in Surrey, and in many careful studies on the Thames, one may trace a constantly strengthening purpose in regard to effect; and so in the Italian sketches, when his imagination was fed, and his feeling roused, by all he saw, his readiness in seizing the true point, "the heart of the scene," becomes more marked, his appreciation of the picturesque in form and colour more keen.

I don't know why he should have left London, where he might have gained money and fame by his drawings, to settle in Leamington, where no one understood them, but he said that his friends wanted to get him "out of the way." Whether or not they thought that it would be better for him to be removed from the temptations of a town life I cannot tell, but, at all events, about 1840 we find him purchasing the teaching connection, at Leamington, of a Mrs. Dighton, a clever woman, the widow of an excellent artist, Dennis Dighton, famed for his military paintings. Here, then, he settled to a

steady life, and to a steady income, and here, finding that the pencil was in favour with his pupils, he "set about showing," as he said, "what could be done with it." Then was produced the masterly series of drawings in Derbyshire—Haddon, Rowsly, Matlock; the drawings in South Wales—the Wye, Ragland, Chepstow, Llanelly, Aberystwith. Then, too, was produced a host of important drawings and sketches of Warwickshire, which, it is a thousand pities, should have been dispersed. In these drawings new effects and new methods abound, of some of which, so far as I know, nothing had been seen before. The pencil is made to work like a brush, laying broad, flat, or delicately gradated tints. It suggests colour, shews surface, and texture, and character. At times no strokes are to be seen; but form, light, shade, and reflected light, are indicated by a magical touch. At other times the pencil is used as a graver. Those who know his drawings well, are acquainted with a host of cases in which the most delicate lines are struck with as much certainty—hundreds of them close together—as if they had each been planned deliberately, and executed slowly; lines as fine, as close, and as even, as any graver could cut. Again, in comparing his touch with others, one may say, that whereas a representative or conventional touch is usually

adopted for each effect, Burgess always aims at the thing itself, and seems to gain fresh inspiration, to find new methods, at each attempt. Take, for example, gradated shadow, which is conventionally represented by lines close together for dark, which lines are placed wider apart as they indicate more and more light. This is the manner of most engraving, emphatically so of engraving "in line," and we are so used to it that these lines awaken in us the appropriate ideas, just as written words awaken ideas of the things they stand for. But Burgess usually prefers to give gradated shadow as it is seen in nature, without break, and he does this often by a stroke, with a precision of form and tone that no lines can rival. Doubtless he owed this power to the marvellous delicacy of touch by which he was able to vary a line with such wonderful accuracy. There can be no doubt that the mental and physical organisations of every individual are in perfect *rapprochement*; that a coarse frame very often indicates a coarse sensibility, the converse being equally true. The expression "a clever hand" is common enough, and to many the hand is a better indication of character than the face. In teaching the piano, I myself am always able to tell, on seeing my pupil's hand, if she is likely to prove a brilliant, or an expressive performer.



Size 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins.

Bain, in his "Mental and Moral Science," has the following, which is very *apropos*: "Both in the tactual and in the muscular element, any superior delicacy will tell upon the worker in plastic material. The muscular precision of the hand and arm is a guarantee for nicety of execution in every species of manipulation—with the surgeon and the artist, no less than the artizan." Now, no one seeing Burgess's hand could have failed to have been struck with its uncommon grace and delicacy. For my own part, I have never seen such light and taper fingers on any man's hand. To this exceedingly fine organisation the perfection of his touch was certainly due.

Mr. Rothwell tells me that he was staying with his friends Whaite and Hayes, at Capel Curig, in July, 1860, when Burgess, previously unknown to them, came "a sketching." "We took him at first for an amateur," says Mr. Rothwell, "but he soon astonished us by the quantity, and the great beauty of his pencil work." Again, in 1863, he went to Brittany with Mr. Rothwell, who says, "I was astonished by his marvellous power in sketching. Such works in pencil I had never seen before, and, indeed, *I believe them to be unequalled*. Not even the great names of Prout, Roberts or Stanfield could, in my opinion, surpass his talent

for beauty and correctness in architectural subjects."

Mr. Rothwell says, in another place, "They are far beyond the powers of Prout, or Roberts. I have one, a sketch at Brunswick, that completely puts into the shade one of the same subject, which I have, by Prout. His figures were far beyond Prout in drawing. He had studied the figure in his younger days with the intention of becoming a figure painter." This, it will be remembered, agrees with what I have recorded of his visit to Italy. Mr. A. W. Bayes, the artist, never had any acquaintance with Burgess, and is a most impartial judge. He writes: "The pictorial power indicated by the pencil drawings is simply wonderful. As pieces of manipulation his pencil work is, I should think, equal to that of any man; much better, in my opinion, than Prout. I think the way he has put in those houses in the Bakewell sketch is simply perfect. I don't think I ever saw it equalled." Mr. C. Radclyffe says: "He was one of the greatest draughtsmen who ever lived; there was a feeling and artistic treatment in his outlines that I have never seen in any other man. And the way he used to do them, often standing with the folio in his hand, was quite marvellous. It was a great honour to your town to have such an artist living in it." Mr. Rothwell

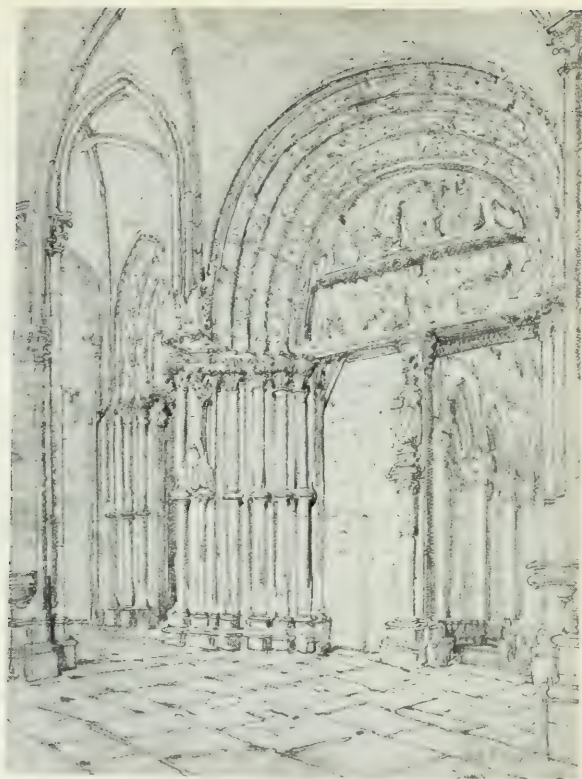
writes to another friend : "I think no artist ever lived who could be compared with him in the use of the lead pencil, and without any exception he was the greatest architectural sketcher this country ever saw." Mr. James Orrock writes to me : "It is not too much to say that as a sketcher, in his own department, Burgess had no superior, if an equal. Like Cattermole and Cox, he had an *accident* and *abandon* in his drawing, which appeal at once to those who love suggestive art. He was an unappreciated man. Being original, this was his penalty. Muller, Cox, Dewint, Barrett, George Chambers, and in our own day, Linnell and Henry Dawson, sen., suffered this penalty as their reward for the gift. Naturally enough, too, dealers only buy what they can sell. An original man needs a few judges to leaven the popular taste, a taste, by the way, which is seldom real. Ordinary collectors are rarely connoisseurs. Burgess himself was perhaps second to none as a connoisseur of fine art. He had, too, a keen and true sense of the finest decorative art, classical and picturesque. When he applied for admission to the Old Society of Painters in Water Colours, George Cattermole was chiefly instrumental in gaining his election. This great genius stoutly said that no one could

draw architecture with a finer spirit, and this carried Burgess in."

Burgess's colour is always interesting. It is remarkable for the beauty and great range of its greys, for clearness, and for mastery in execution. Sunny and cheerful effects are the rule, while a play of colour pervades every work, most agreeable to the eye, and satisfactory to the judgment. Originality and mastery are in every touch, while there is always apparent that strict adherence to truth, and indisposition to flatter, even nature, so characteristic of the man. But this very originality, which makes his work so delightful to artists, is the reason why it is so little understood by the public.

Mr. Ruskin once called upon him, and, I believe, made some most complimentary comparisons between his work and Prout's. But Burgess could not be induced to repeat all that Ruskin said. Had it been to his disadvantage he would have proclaimed it loudly.

It has been remarked that some of his water-colour drawings are wanting in the breadth and repose that are thought to give a value to the works of Prout and some others. To my own taste this said breadth is often a very monotonous quality, and when truth is sacrificed to it, as we see in some much-admired



Size 12 by 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins.

paintings, it is, I think, too dearly bought. "Breadth," says one of our great painters, "may be turned into mannered or insipid flatness." Many painters libel the most beautiful scenes by wilfully *understating* nine-tenths, perhaps, of their interest, to get what they call "effect" out of the remaining tenth. Burgess had often led me to think that he despised any such mechanical aid, but he shrank from comparisons between himself and others. I have, however, consulted Mr. Rothwell on the point, and this is what he says: "There is, sometimes, not that general breadth that Prout always shews in his works, and which *I know* was looked upon by Burgess as a trick of art. *I know* that he always aimed at the nearest approach to nature in every subject he attempted." As compared with other artists, Burgess has a very marked individuality of style, and, contrary to the general opinion, a wide range of subject. In an enormous number of figure studies with which I am acquainted, a grasp of character, a power of representing action, and a surprising facility of execution, shew that had he followed up that line of art he might have taken a place in the front rank. The figures in all his works are capitally drawn, and highly appropriate in character to the scenes they animate. It happened that his power of

giving interest to street subjects hit the public taste. Work of this kind *sold*, and so he got to be called an architectural artist. This was most repugnant to him. He knew his power in landscape, over which he could at times throw as much, or more, enchantment as over buildings. He has declared to me, many a time, that his very best work was a landscape. But I think it will be admitted that more taste and judgment are required for the due appreciation of excellence in landscape than in architecture, and this accounts for the prominence given to street drawings in public estimation.

It should be remembered that Burgess's powers can only be judged by the studies he made from nature, or the finished works he produced from them; as, for instance, those shewn at the exhibitions of the society to which he belonged. But in his long and busy teaching career he "knocked off" hundreds of *lesson bits* for his pupils, which, clever as they are, should, out of regard to his fame, have been destroyed. Taking the circumstances into account under which these slight things were produced, the precepts they were intended to illustrate, the various tastes or deficiencies in the pupils they were designed to meet, they have, doubtless, a certain interest, but I cannot do otherwise than smile when these are shewn to me as "draw-

ings" by Burgess! In teaching he had two charges; at the higher one the pupil kept the drawings that he made during the lessons. At the lower charge, only a few shillings less than the other, he kept them himself. The greater part were done during a single lesson, a small proportion in two, or more. But so few of his pupils had paid the higher charge that in the course of years the "bits" had accumulated to a surprising number. I repeat that he would have done a better thing to have burnt these, than to have allowed them to get into places, where, with name conspicuously stuck on, they are paraded as "signed works by this artist." I have seen one of these lesson bits, a large one, that he refused to sell to an artist friend of mine, as being utterly unworthy of either of them, "only good enough to light a fire with," he said, exposed for sale at 50 guineas.

He had a great antipathy to dealers, and, I believe, would not, until quite lately, sell to them on any terms. This was wrong. Had a certain number of his works passed into the hands of men interested in realising their full value, their merits would sooner have been proclaimed. Many buyers of pictures now-a-days are guided entirely by the judgment of their favourite dealers. A merchant prince has given three thousand guineas for a work that he has

just seen knocked down to a dealer for fifteen hundred, though, perhaps, he would not have given thirty shillings for it on his own judgment.

Burgess disliked selling to those whom he thought might not understand his work. I have never seen him better pleased than on one occasion when a "patron," as he insisted on calling a buyer, having complained of some lines in a gabled window in a certain fine drawing as being "out of the perpendicular," he begged that it might be returned. "I have got back my Church at Falaise," said he, "and I shall ask more for it from the next patron. This one says he has a very straight eye. He doesn't know that a history attaches to that very window, of a sacristan, who might have been the original of Quasimodo, and who hanged himself from the front of it. His legs hung clear of the lower part of the window in consequence of that very want of perpendicularity now objected to. If the drawing wants interest this circumstance supplies it."

He always refused to sell his pencil sketches from nature. He used to say that a friend had once pressed him, and had given him a good sum for a sketch done in twenty minutes, but that "it was on his mind."

Of certain drawings painted for sale I can remember as follows:—Burgess would begin,

“So and so has been again, wanting such and such drawings.” “Well, I suppose you will let him have them, if he gives you the price you have fixed?” “No, I’m not so sure about that. He doesn’t understand them. Chromo lithographs would answer his purpose as well. I would rather take a good deal less from a better judge.” Here is an anecdote that bears on this point:—Burgess was sketching in a German town, Bamberg, perhaps, or Paderborn, when an old Jew dealer in curiosities, seeing him at work, came and looked on. He became interested, then absorbed in what he saw, followed Burgess about, and ended by saying that he would buy all he had seen done. This was declined, but Burgess had the ill-luck to step into his shop, where the old fellow, finding that entreaties and heavy offers were of no avail, suddenly changed his tone, and by way of revenge tried to fasten it on him that he had bargained to buy some rubbish he had been looking at. Burgess thought it best to retreat to his steamer, for he was leaving the same afternoon, but the man followed him, trying at times to seize him by the collar, and mixing coaxing appeals to him to sell the sketches, with the most violent threats and abuse. “Now,” said Burgess, in telling the story, “that old Jew was full of knowledge and feeling, and, rascal as

he was, I felt greatly tempted to send him the sketches, for he was one of the few who could appreciate them."

In 1850 he was elected an associate of the Society of Painters in Water Colours, of which at that time the following gentlemen were members: C. Bently, W. Callow, G. Cattermole, David Cox, E. Duncan, W. Evans, Copley Fielding, E. O. Finch, G. A. Fripp, A. D. Fripp, H. Gastineau, W. Hunt, J. F. Lewis, F. Mackenzie, F. Nash, J. Nash, W. A. Nesfield, O. Oakley, Sam. Prout, H. Richter, W. Collingwood Smith, J. Stephanoff, F. Tayler, F. W. Topham, W. Turner, J. M. Wright. Associates: Val. Bartholomew, C. Branwhite, John Callow, D. Cox, jun., Geo. Dodgson, W. Evans, A. Glennie, Carl Haag, J. Jenkins, Paul Naftel, Sam. Palmer, Luke Price, Sam. Rayner, T. M. Richardson, G. Rosenberg, W. Scott, J. Whichelo. Ladies: Mrs. H. Criddle, Maria Harrison, Nancy Rayner, Eliza Sharpe. I have been told that Mr. George Cattermole, who, not knowing him personally, was an enthusiastic admirer of his talent, made great exertions to secure his election. He is reported to have said, "We want originality, and Burgess has it."

There are but few things preserved for record as to Burgess's manner of work. He liked to



Size 21 $\frac{3}{8}$ by 14 $\frac{5}{8}$ ins.

sketch standing, the folio resting on the left arm. Most of his sketches from nature were done so. It gave him the opportunity of moving away when incommoded by lookers on, and it was his habit to shut up his book, as if he had finished, to take a turn round the streets, and then, getting another start, to secure as much as he could before the crowd had time to reassemble. Sketching seated, when quite a lad, in Rouen, a drunken passer-by knocked his hat so completely over his eyes that he had the greatest difficulty to extricate himself from it. This probably made him nervous at sitting in streets. But he had a better reason. In large towns, where good points of view are often found in the roadways, the being able to get easily out of the way of passing traffic must be a great comfort. But, besides, views taken standing look truer, and in street scenes the perspective lines are more agreeable. From a seat the horizontal line is often too low, the result being a preponderance of descending lines, and an exaggeration of their angles.

Burgess liked rough, common paper, with plenty of "bite" in it. For landscape, a tinted paper, often "sugar paper," putting in high lights with Chinese white. His pencils, doubtless, were varied, as the drawings show, but he principally used some common French ones, in

the tone of which he rejoiced. These were but of two qualities, one a little darker than the other. He cut them in various ways, some with fine points, others blunt; some chisel-shaped, or square, or sloped. Then he produced certain effects of light, or of surface by using the uncut end of his pencil, making indentations in the paper before applying the lead.

It will be found on looking into the drawings that a close adherence to truth is their chief characteristic. It has been said very truly that the nearest approach to reality is the highest ideal, and I think that all true lovers of art now-a-days feel that nothing can equal the beauty and the interest of nature. No matter what skill or taste may be shewn in composed subjects, in studio combinations of colour, the best of these will be rejected in favour of close transcripts from nature itself. But it is, of course, impossible for an artist to carry out in colour, and on the spot, every good subject he meets with, and the power of sketching rapidly, correctly, and suggestively, with the pencil is an extremely valuable one. Burgess had this power, and he had a very retentive memory, but he had also a method in many of his studio drawings of painting the effects he saw from his own windows, and this, I believe, gives them the great air of truth and freshness they possess.

He would say, "I make as many notes as I can on the spot of local colour, and shape of shadows, but I can put in skies, shadow tints, and reflected light, as well in Leamington as in Rouen or Nuremburg."

In confirmation of what has gone before, regarding the genius shewn in his landscapes, I may mention that a rather unimpressible artist friend of mine exclaimed, on seeing a folio of them, "Why, this man is the very Doré of Landscape. He has the hand of a giant."

He had great taste in music, an excellent baritone voice, and he had played the guitar very fairly in his time. He spoke French, Italian, and German, and had a very good acquaintance with general literature. Many will be interested to know that though not a church goer, and without making any profession of religion, he was a sincere believer, and an earnest reader of the Bible.

It was only by close study that the good in the character, as well as in the talent of John Burgess could be fully appreciated. His character had as little of the "common place" as his art. The key to that character was a profound contempt and hatred of falsehood in all its shapes. But this was united to a great deal of pride, and an odd kind of humour, one of the outcomes of which combination being

that he despised any attempt to seem better than he was. Thus it happened that if strangers went to see him he often brought out his worst drawings, and aired his little failings. I am not sure that he did not chuckle in a quiet way at mystifying a chance acquaintance. Great penetration, united to a lively sensibility, enabled him to see through the shams in others he scorned to wear himself, and an obstinate, splenetic, temperament, joined to much experience of the world, had taught him to match each man with his own weapon. To the call of charity his purse was always open; hospitality was to him a kind of religion; but for "cadgers," no matter whether in rags or in broadcloth, he had stony bowels. To the needy artist no one more ready with advice or assistance; with a speculator in his talent no one so close. With the selfish, or the scandalmongers, or the conceited, he would quickly make himself vastly disagreeable, though to men whom he esteemed no lapse of time, no loss of health, made any change in his unvarying sweetness of thought and temper.

These remarks had been penned long before I thought of writing to Mr. Orrock, who, in a most interesting way, confirms my views. And I think it well worthy of notice that the testimony to Burgess's worth from his brother artists



Size 165 by 214 ins.

is so ungrudged and hearty. Mr. Orrock says :
“He was a most unselfish man. He never did a mean thing. He was often irritable, unreasonable, and violent, but never unmanly. He was proud, and conscious of his power, but would sell his works for almost nothing to any who understood him.” (Note how well this agrees with what has been said above.) “When I had the pleasure, some twenty years ago, of selling Mr. David New, of Nottingham, some of his choicest drawings, his unselfish nature and independence of character shewed itself. He said that I was on no account to persuade Mr. New to buy his drawings, for he was certain the public would denounce them, and Mr. New might regret he had taken my advice. I could give many more examples of his generosity.”

I should like here to mention some other incidents within my own knowledge, that emphasize still more this interesting trait in his character. A well-known amateur, and an excellent judge of Burgess's work, once offered him 10 guineas for a little drawing, to which Burgess answered, “I cannot sell it you at that price. It is well worth 12 guineas ; but I shall be glad to give it to you as you like it so much.”

Another friend had been wishing to buy three drawings, but had been rebuffed more than once about them. At length Burgess, being pressed,

said, "Take them home for a week, and then we'll talk about the price." At the time fixed the friend said that he still liked the drawings, and that he would give so and so for them. "Ah, would you?" said Burgess, "I am glad you like them so well, but it is too much money. How do you make out the sum?" So the prices were named at which each drawing had been estimated, when Burgess said, "Yes, I think that one of them is fairly worth your price, but the others are each three guineas too much. So if you really are determined to have them, it must be at six guineas less than your offer."

The other story he told me himself, of some one, an excellent judge, he said, who wanted one of his finest drawings for less than he asked, though he asked very little. The amateur, after many months' consideration, being willing at last to give the sum originally named, Burgess would not then take it, but wanted five guineas more. This was found unsatisfactory, and it was again a long time before the would-be purchaser decided on giving the enhanced price, and to his disgust was again met by a demand for still five more guineas. Now I have it on very good authority that at least two other persons were desirous of buying that drawing, and either would gladly have given more than

the highest price that had yet been named for it. But Burgess thought the amateur the best judge, and was very wishful that it should be his. His being possessed of judgment, however, made the fact of his denying himself the picture for the sake of a few pounds very galling to Burgess, who vowed very warmly that so long as he made it a question of money, so long would the drawings go on advancing in price.

It may well be thought that such a character would be misunderstood. It was so. The selfish took him to be greedy, the vain thought him proud, the ill-bred called him insolent. A few only, as I have said before, knew how good a heart was hidden under the rugged exterior.

Those who can reason from effects back to causes will be able to trace, if I am not much mistaken, the character of this artist in the originality, power, and highmindedness with which he treated all his subjects. It is a great truth that a man's work is the truest measure of himself, and I cannot do better than ask those who have run through these few paragraphs with me to judge the late John Burgess by this standard.

A list of the water-colour drawings
exhibited by John Burgess, Esq.,
Associate Member of the Society of
Painters in Water - colours, at the
Society's Rooms, 5, Pall Mall East,
London :—

1851. Cloisters of the Church at Treguier, Brittany.
Shrine and Chapel of St. Ives, in the same church.
Chateau de la Duchesse Anne de Bretagne.
Folgoat, Brittany.
Old Bridge at Stirling.
1852. Roodloft under Restoration in Church at Dixmude, Belgium.
Ruben's Statue, and Cathedral, Antwerp.
Pulpit in the Cathedral at Ypres.
Canal at Oudenarde.
Fountain and Church at Guingamp, Brittany.
Shrine of St. Sibald, Nuremburg.
1853. Interior of Church at Treves.
Le Gros Horloge, Rouen.
Street at Caudebec.
Tomb of the Duc de Brezé, Rouen Cathedral.
Statue of Joan of Arc, from Gateway of the Hotel
Bourgthéroutle, Rouen.
Church at Harfleur.
1854. Street and Chateau at Amboise, Loire.
Interior of Porch in Cathedral at Chartres.
Street and Clock Tower at Amboise.
Cathedral at Chartres.
Interior of South Porch, Cathedral, at Chartres.
1855. St. Jacques, Caen.
Remains of an old Church at Orleans.
Sakramentshauschen in der Lorenzkirche, at Nuremburg.
Statue of Joan of Arc, Orleans.
Maison des Bateliers, Ghent.
Ruined Abbey of Clare, Galway.
Town Hall at Oudenarde.
The Keep, Clare, Galway.
1856. Remains of the Roman Theatre at Arles.
North Porch, Chartres.
Statue of Duquesne, Dieppe.
Porta Nigra, Treves.
The Pope's Mint, and part of Palace at Avignon.

- Chateau, Dieppe.
West Front of Cathedral of Dijon.
1857. At Rotterdam.
Canal and Church at Dort.
Market Place and Tower of St. Rumbald at Mechlin.
Barrack Entrance to the Chateau at Blois.
Street and Canal at Dort.
Chapter House and part of Cathedral, Rouen.
Fountain and Church of Notre Dame at Nuremburg.
1858. Observatory and Clock Tower, Auxerre.
Spire and Church of St. Germain, Auxerre, from the river.
Transept and Stonemason's Yard, at Sens.
Part of Sens Cathedral.
Hotel de Ville, Louvain.
Curious Romanesque Church and Clock Tower at Avallon,
Burgundy.
Clock Tower at Avallon.
Thomas à Beckett's Well, and part of Sens Cathedral.
1859. Bronze Fountain and the Town Hall at Brunswick.
The Gan Kirche and Fountain of Neptune, Paderborn
Westphalia.
Part of the Rath Haus, and Street Scene at Paderborn.
Rath Haus and Fountain, Paderborn.
Porch and Transept of Cathedral, Munster.
St. Martin's Church and Old Houses in the Market Place,
Brunswick.
The Ludgen Kirche, Munster.
Rath Haus and the Lamberti Church, Munster.
1860. Fountain and Red House Hotel, Trèves.
Part of the Lamberti Church, Munster.
Part of the Lamberti Church and John of Leyden's House,
Munster.
Entrance to the Library, Rouen Cathedral.
Town Hall and Tower of the Dom Kirche, Bremen.
Town Hall and St. Martin's Church, Brunswick.
The Church and the Three Yew Trees, Bettws-y-coed, a
study on the spot. (This fine work was also exhibited
at the "Paris Universal Exhibition, 1867.")
1861. A Passage of Rocks, a study on the Lugwy, near Capel Curig.
Old Walls, Old Buildings, and Washerwomen at Morlaix.
Tabernacle in the Church of Notre Dame, Courtrai.
Street Scene in Munster.
Tower of St. Andrew's Church and Old Houses at Brunswick.
A clearing up of Snowdon, a study from the old road at
Capel Curig.
A Canal Scene at Oudenarde.
An Old Oak Tree and Cottage at Capel Curig.

1862. Part of the Amphitheatre at Arles.
 Porte Guillaume and the Cathedral, Chartres.
 Tower in the Quadrangle of the Chateau de Blois
 Tower and Gateway on the Walls of Nuremburg.
 Town Hall at the Hague.
 Ruined Porch of the Cathedral, Chartres.
 Canal Scene at Malines.
1863. Part of Chateau Gaillard, as seen from a street in Les
 Petits Andelys.
 Street, Les Grands Andelys.
 Part of the Bishop's Palace, Beauvais.
 River and Street Scene, Gisors.
 Interior of Church at Calais.
 Cathedral and Street, Beauvais.
 Street, Beauvais, and part of Cathedral.
1864. Street and part of Beauvais Cathedral.
 Church of St. Gervais and Prolais, Gisors.
 Street and Chateau, Vitré.
 Antwerp Cathedral and Ruben's Statue.
 Façade of Cathedral and the Jacquemards of Dijon.
 Street Scene and Clock Tower, Dinan.
 Transept and Tower of St. Jacques, Caen.
1865. St. Trinité, Falaise.
 Equestrian Statue of William the Conqueror, Falaise.
 Church Tower and Calvary at Pleyben, Brittany.
 St. Leonard, Fougères.
 Queen Berengaria's House, Rue Royale, Le Mans.
 Cathedral and Scarrons House, Le Mans.
 Lamballe, Brittany.
 Street, Quimper.
1866. St. Gervaise, Falaise.
 Spire and Market Place, Treguier.
 Abdel Kader's Prison, Amboise.
 Statue of Duguesne, Dieppe.
 The Spires of Quimper, from an hotel window.
 L'Eglise St. Père, Vezelay.
 Pope's Mint, and Entrance to Palace, Avignon.
1867. Prince Polignac's Prison on Mont St. Michel.
 Cathedral, Pope's Palace, &c., Avignon.
 Cathedral at Auxerre.
 St. Gudule, Brussels.
 Auxerre.
 South Porch and Tower of Cathedral, Dol.



Size 11½ by 9 ins.

1868. Broken Bridge at Avignon.
 Spire and Market Place, Lillebonne.
 Rose Window in Transept of Cathedral, Sens.
 Part of Bishop's Palace, Beauvais.
 Lamballe.
 Farm Buildings and Church Tower, Radford, near Leamington.
1869. The Slate Belfry and Corn Exchange, Honfleur.
 Street and Church at Mont Villier, Normandy.
 Catuchemen in the Church of St. Pére, Vezelay.
 Porch of Cathedral, Lisieux.
 Cattle Market and Church of St. Jacques, Lisieux.
 Rue des Orfèvres, Lisieux.
1870. Calais from the Pier.
 Quimper from the Brest Road.
 Chateau, Dieppe.
 Calais: Shrimping Girls hastening to the Dover Boat.
 River Leam at Leamington.
1871. Porte Guillaume, Chartres.
 Street Scene, Beauvais.
 The Abbey of Jumieges.
 St. Aignan and Broken Bridge, Chartres.
 Vezelay, where the First Crusade was preached.
 Les Jaquesmards and Church-tower.
 Tower from Market Place, Dijon.
 The Chapel of St. Hubert and Towers at Chateau, d'Amboise.
 Castle Mill, Warwick.
1872. Fountain and Lorenzkirche, Nuremburg.
 St. Trinité, Falaise.
 Le Gros Horloge, Rouen.
 The Entrance to the Citadel, from the Walls at Nuremburg.
 Transept of Cathedral and Old Houses at Lisieux.
 A Street Scene in Warwick.
 Cathedral at Abbeville.
 Tower and Spire at Honfleur, from the Lezarde.
1873. Warwick from the Meadows.
 Part of Cathedral at St. Brieuc, Brittany.
 Chapel of Baldwin, Courtrai.
 Canal, Rail, and Telegraph, Offchurch near Leamington.
 Street Scene, Amiens.
1874. The Jubé, Tournai Cathedral.
 Ufton Tower, near Warwick.
 Hotel Bourgtheroulde, Rouen, Place Jeanne d'Arc.
 Church at Treguier, Brittany.

At the Winter Exhibitions of Sketches and Studies, 5, Pall Mall East :—

- 1862-3. Chateau Gaillard, on the Seine.
Old Carved Woodhouses, Gisors, Picardy.
Old Walls, Conway.
"Rue des Poissons," Calais.
Geologists' Ground—the old red sand stone at Ludlow, Shropshire.
Cottages at Capel Curig.
- 1863-4. Dinan, Brittany.
Gateway and Towers at Fougères, Brittany.
The Cross and High Street, Winchester.
Stone Pulpit outside the Church of Notre Dame, at Vitré, Brittany.
The Cross at Winchester.
Pulpit and Interior of Cathedral at Antwerp.
Pencil and tinted Sketch of Hotel de Ville, Oudenarde.
- 1864-5. Shrine of St. Sibald, Nuremburg.
Church of St. Gervaise, Falaise.
Part of St. Gervaise, Falaise, Normandy.
Cul de Sac at Vitré, Brittany.
Chateau and Chapel of the Counts de Ponthieve, Lamballe, Brittany.
Melrose, by daylight.
Street Scene, Vitré.
A Calvary at Pleyben, Brittany.
- 1865-6. L'Eglise St. Trinité, Falaise.
Chateau, Fontaine Henri, near Caen.
L'Eglise St. Père, near Vezelay, Burgundy.
Richard Hughes's Conway Falls Inn.
Back of the Waterloo Hotel, Bettws-y-Coed.
Old Lighthouse, and Hotel de Ville, Calais.
Street Scene at Quimper, Brittany.
Old Road at the Conway Falls, North Wales.
Sketch at Westminster—the New Embankment Works.
- 1866-7. Tower and Spire at Caudebec.
Court and Tower in Hotel de Ville, Ypres.
Hotel de Ville, Louvain.
Le Creizker, St. Pol de Leon, Brittany.
Interior of the Church of Le Folgoat, Finisterre.
Town Hall and Market Place, Bremen.
Old Houses at Bruges.
Gigantic Effigy of Roland, and Town Hall, Bremen.
Part of Sens Cathedral.
- 1867-8. At the Sawpit, Kenilworth.
Distant View of Kenilworth.
Quentin Matsy's Well, Antwerp.
Tomb of Cardinal Amboise, Rouen Cathedral

- Radford Hall, near Leamington.
 Notre Dame des Miracles, at Orleans.
 Interior of the Cathedral at Tournay.
 Shrine in the Church at Treguier, Brittany.
 Old Gateway at Dinan, Brittany.
- 1868-9. Porch and Tower of Montevillier, Normandy.
 Chapel and Hospital of the Sisters of Mercy, Normandy.
 The Pix in St. Lorenz Kirche, Nuremburg.
 The Old Gate Port of Honfleur.
 High Altar, Montevillier.
 The Eagle Tower, Caernarvon Castle.
 Belfry and Market Place, Honfleur.
 The Slate Belfry, Honfleur.
 Kenilworth, from the Chase.
 Interior, Montevillier, Normandy.
- 1869-70. Church at Honfleur.
 Caernarvon Castle.
 Abbeville.
 Interior of a Church at Abbeville.
 Church Porch, Abbeville.
 Interior of a Court-yard, Abbeville.
- 1870-1. Bridge at Treves, Moselle.
 Remains of Old Convent, and part of Cathedral at Abbeville.
 Abbey and Seminary of St. Riquier, Abbeville.
 Court Yard, Hotel Tete de Bœuf, Abbeville.
 Village of St. Riquier and its Mairie.
 Cathedral at Abbeville, from the Poissonnerie.
 Porch at the Cathedral at Chartres.
 Interior of Church at Calais.
 Chapter House at Notre Dame, Paris.
 The Pix in the Church at Courtrai.
 Old Water Mill at Weston, near Leamington.
- 1872-3. Street of Carved Wood Houses, Lannion.
 Barrack Entrance, Chateau de Blois.
 St. Maclou under Repair, Rouen.
 Interior, Roslyn Chapel, Moonlight.
 A Murky Day on the Thames.
 Part of St. Etienne, Beauvais.
 Kew Church, Twilight.
 Clock Tower and Street, Auxerre.
 Interior of Chapel at the Earl of Leycester's Hospital,
 Warwick.
- 1873-4. Part of Bishop's Palace, now Hotel de Ville, Beauvais.
 St. Saveur, Dinan, Brittany.
 Chateau Gaillard, Les Andelys, Normandy.
 At Ypres, Belgium.
 Cathedral Tournay, Belgium.
 Maison de Tristan, Louis XI.'s Executioner, Tours.
 Study at Bettws-y-Coed.

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Messrs. Puttick & Simpson's, as these would doubtlessly have afforded him considerable additional material. Nevertheless, he has written an informative and highly interesting monograph, which throws a good deal of light on Farington's relations with Wilson, Lawrence, Constable, and other well-known artists, who benefited by his advice and influence. The number forms one of the best of a highly useful series, for which all lovers of early English art must be grateful to Mr. Walker."

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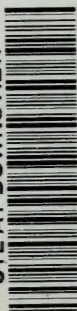
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